

Contents

<i>List of figures</i>	<i>page</i> x
<i>List of tables</i>	xv
<i>Acknowledgements</i>	xviii
<i>List of abbreviations and symbols</i>	xx
1 Introduction	1
1.1 The syntactic complexity of noun phrases	1
1.2 Factor correlation: length and structure	7
1.3 Factor isolation: length vs structure	10
1.4 Sentential vs nominal NPs	14
1.5 Outline	18
2 The variationist framework	20
2.1 Variation, variables, and variants	20
2.2 Functional explanations for the effects of NP-complexity on cases of variation	23
2.2.1 The Principle of End Weight: efficiency in grammar	24
2.2.2 The Complexity Principle: a transparency strategy	27
2.3 Constraints other than NP-complexity	30
3 Methodology I: defining the syntactic complexity of NPs	33
3.1 Length	33
3.2 Structure	35
3.2.1 Previous approaches	35
3.2.1.1 Nodes, phrasal nodes, index of syntactic complexity	35
3.2.1.2 Scale of nominal and sentential NPs	41
3.2.2 Operationalisation in this study	42
3.2.2.1 Single postmodification	42
3.2.2.2 Multiple postmodification	52
3.3 Hypotheses	58
3.4 The distribution of NP-structures across the four variables	65

viii Contents

4	Methodology II: modes of data presentation, statistical procedures, and electronic corpora	68
4.1	Modes of presentation: univariate and multivariate analyses	68
4.2	Statistical procedures	70
4.3	Electronic corpora	75
5	Optional verb phrases in topic-restricting <i>as far as</i> constructions	81
5.1	Introduction	81
5.2	NP-complexity and syntactic variation	85
5.2.1	Structural complexity and syntactic variation	86
5.2.2	The parameters NP-length and NP-structure	93
5.2.3	Free nominal relative clauses	96
5.2.4	Multivariate analyses	99
5.3	Other factors	106
5.3.1	External linguistic factors: mode and text types	107
5.3.2	Analogous constructions	112
5.4	Conclusion and outlook	115
6	Word-order variation involving the collocations <i>take prisoner</i> , <i>hold prisoner</i> and <i>take hostage</i> , <i>hold hostage</i>	118
6.1	Introduction	118
6.2	NP-complexity and word-order variation	126
6.2.1	NP-length	127
6.2.2	NP-structure	130
6.2.3	Length vs structure	137
6.2.4	Multivariate analyses	141
6.3	Other complexity factors	149
6.3.1	Coordinate predicates	149
6.3.2	Discourse factors	152
6.3.3	Multivariate analysis	155
6.4	Conclusion and outlook	158
7	Word order variation involving pre- and postposed <i>notwithstanding</i>	161
7.1	Introduction	161
7.2	NP-complexity and word-order variation	166
7.2.1	NP-length, NP-structure, and word-order variation	168
7.2.2	Length vs structure	175
7.2.3	Free nominal relative clauses – a structural knock-out context?	179
7.2.4	Multivariate analyses	181

7.3	Other factors	187
7.3.1	NP reductions	187
7.3.2	Sentence position of <i>notwithstanding</i>	191
7.4	Conclusion and outlook	194
8	Infinitival variation following <i>help</i>	196
8.1	Introduction	196
8.2	NP-complexity and infinitival variation	202
8.2.1	NP-length	203
8.2.2	NP-structure	205
8.2.3	Length vs structure	210
8.2.4	Multivariate analyses	214
8.3	Competing factors: NP-complexity and <i>horror aequi</i>	218
8.3.1	Previous research	218
8.3.2	NP-length, NP-structure, and <i>horror aequi</i>	220
8.3.3	Multivariate analysis	225
8.4	Conclusion and outlook	228
9	NP-complexity and change	231
9.1	Change involving <i>notwithstanding</i>	231
9.1.1	Historical overview	232
9.1.2	The role of NP-complexity	237
9.2	Change involving <i>as far as</i>	239
9.2.1	Historical overview	239
9.2.2	The role of NP-complexity	242
9.3	Language-external constraints: colloquialisation and economy	244
9.4	Conclusion and outlook	248
10	Conclusion and future directions	250
	<i>References</i>	262
	Primary sources (electronic corpora)	262
	Secondary sources	263
	<i>Index</i>	274